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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

MONDAY, AUGUST 28, 2006

In Today's Papers

Struggle Against the PKK; US to Name Coordinator  
Milliyet, Hurriyet, Zaman, Sabah and others: Milliyet reports Kurdistan Democratic Party officials in Iraq have been disturbed by Turkish troop activities in Kanimasi and Bamerni towns in Northern Iraq and pressured the US to use its influence on Turkey to withdraw its troops. The paper reports that Turkey has put its 1500 troops deployed in Northern Iraq since 1997 on alert, in cooperation with KDP. The mountainous region in Zako and Dohuk, which is believed to be a transit route for the PKK to penetrate Turkey, is being patrolled by Turkish troops. Saturday's Zaman and Monday papers report that the US is going to appoint former NATO Supreme Allied Commander of the US in Europe Joseph Ralston as a special envoy to coordinate efforts in combating the PKK. Zaman and Sabah also mention that General Ralston, as vice-chairman, was the top candidate to succeed the Chief of Joint Staffs position in 1997, however his affair with a CIA employee during the 1980s while he and his wife were separated became public, and he was forced to withdraw his name from consideration.

Change of Command at the Turkish General Staff (TGS)

All papers report that in a ceremony at the TGS headquarters to be held at 16:30 Monday, General Yasar Buyukanit will take over duties as the Chief of General Staff from General Hilmi Ozkok. At a ceremony last Friday, General Buyukanit handed over his post as the Land Forces Commander to General Ilker Basbug. Both Generals made strong remarks about the principle of secularism, separatist terrorism and the unity and integrity of the country.

Three Options for Deciding on Troop Deployment in Lebanon

Cumhuriyet reports that despite the objections of the President, the Military and the opposition, the Turkish Government is determined to send troops to Lebanon. Within this framework, the government is working on three formulas: The first possibility is to pass the resolution in Parliament prior to Kofi Annan's visit on September 6.

The second plan is to bring the resolution to the Parliament right after Kofi Annan's speech to the Parliament and finally, take action

according to the reaction after the UN Secretary General's speech at the Parliament. Saturday's papers gave extensive coverage to President Sezer's objections to Government plans for sending troops to Lebanon. Saturday's Sabah reported that at the change of command ceremony in the Land Forces on Friday, Sezer stressed that the priority task of the Turkish Government is to solve problems at home. Sezer was quoted as saying that "Turkey is not responsible for protecting the interests of other countries or for solving security problems abroad."

In the Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak Fehmi Koru notes what he believes is justifiable mistrust of Israel among many countries, causing them to hesitate in committing to peacekeeping participation: "Israel is the main reason for this hesitation. There is a clear mistrust of Israel in almost every country. A recent comment by respected Washington Post reporter Thomas Ricks actually says it all. Apparently Israeli forces were intentionally not countering some of Hezbollah's missiles during the recent conflict because they thought they could have moral supremacy in the Lebanon operations as long as missiles continued to strike Israel. Can we possibly trust a country like Israel which apparently did not even care for the lives of its own citizens? Considering similar examples of the incredible Israeli tactics, if the countries contributing to the peacekeeping force are hesitant because of Israel, we cannot blame them."

#### Bomb Explosions in Marmaris, Istanbul

Papers and TV channels reported that a total of 21 persons --10 British citizens and 11 Turkish -- were wounded in the explosions which occurred in Mugla's Marmaris district on Saturday night. The

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first explosion in Marmaris occurred inside an inner-city minibus when the bomb exploded, which was placed under the seat of the minibus. Approximately 45 minutes after this explosion, bombs placed in garbage bins at the seafront of the Ataturk Boulevard and at the Siteler neighborhood exploded one after another. There were no wounded in Siteler, however, six were wounded at the seafront boulevard. Meanwhile, six persons were wounded when a bomb placed near the wall of a school exploded in Istanbul's Bagcilar district. There have been no claims of responsibility for any of the explosions.

TV News:  
(NTV, 7.00 A.M.)

#### Domestic News

Q Seven people were killed when a car plunges into a construction hole on Ankara-Konya road.  
Q Forest fires in Bursa and Bolu have been brought under control  
Q State arms producer MKEK has started campaign for the sale of its handguns for customers using credit cards  
Q DYP leader Mehmet Agar extends support to President Sezer in debates about the dispatch of troops to Lebanon  
Q Seven people were killed in an explosion at a fuel oil station on the Adana-Konya road

#### International News

Q Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah said that he would not have ordered the capture of two Israeli soldiers if he had known it would lead to such a war  
Q Delta Air Line commuter plane crashes shortly after takeoff in the US, killing 49  
Q Two Fox-TV journalists kidnapped two weeks ago in Gaza have been released by their captors

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